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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Port Information: Novorossiisk and Kherson

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remained in port only four hours and practically no one went ashore. A Soviet pilot was picked up from a small motor boat near the entrance to Odessa harbor. While passing through Kherson Bay, a few small fishing craft were noted but neither characteristics nor the exact position of these craft could be furnished. The informants believed that dredging of the channel between points (A) and (B) on overlay to BA Chart No 2380 was necessary to keep the channel open for navigation, but they did not observe a dredge.

3. The vessel was berthed at (C) on overlay to BA Chart No 2380, which the informants stated was the only grain loading pier in Kherson.

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4. No naval defenses, no harbor defenses and no naval ships were observed in the harbor area. The port was characterized as being very small and unimportant.
5. Longshoremen were observed to talk little to each other and seemed to be afraid to answer any questions put to them [redacted] by other crew members.

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6. The port of Novorossiisk was visited [redacted]
[redacted] Information obtained [redacted] pertains to the more recent of the two visits [redacted]

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7. A Soviet pilot boarded the vessel at (A) on overlay to HO Chart No 4217. Although the pilot was competent, [redacted] he was "just a little drunk." The vessel was berthed at (B) on overlay to HO Chart No 4217 to load a cargo of 6,747 tons of oats in bulk. In loading, "aspirators" were used. Because of the [redacted] limited knowledge of English, the mechanical details of the loading equipment could not be determined by the boarding officer.

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8. The longshoremen were men whose ages ranged from about 20 years to 45 years. Women were used only to take samples of the grain during loading. The efficiency of the longshoremen was described as being satisfactory. Attempts on the part of the crew members to talk to the women samplers were futile. Neither they nor the male dock workers wanted to communicate with the foreign sailors. [redacted] that there was practically no talking or laughing among the longshoremen as is common in other ports of the world.

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9. Security measures encountered at Novorossiisk consisted of a search of the vessel upon arrival; the posting of three sentries, one at the bow, one at the gangway and one at the stern; and a small tug which remained continuously on the seaward side of the vessel. [redacted] the search conducted of the vessel was not for such articles as unsealed cigarettes, liquor or contraband but was for "people." The searchers paid no attention to unsealed ship's stores and the personal possessions of the crew.

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10. The Soviet shipping agent spoke English and it was in this language that the ship's business was conducted. Rarely did the agent, a Communist, come alone to the ship. Usually he was accompanied by several other men. Before one of the men would answer any question, he would consult with the others. When in groups, [redacted] none of the Soviets would accept even a foreign cigarette but when alone, they showed no such disinterest in a free cigarette or drink. Soviet citizens encountered ashore were the same way about accepting anything from foreigners.

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11. The crew was permitted to go ashore, duplicate passes being utilized. When a few of the crew members went ashore, they found the rate of exchange so unfavorable that after the first evening practically no one went ashore. They found it impossible to make friends with any of the Soviet girls. While there was a dance hall in Novorossiisk, [redacted] the price of beer was five times as high as that in their country. Even if the crew members had been able to make the acquaintance of any Soviet girls in Novorossiisk, the Soviet forms of dancing did not appeal to them.

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12. [redacted] in general, there was little activity of any kind in the harbor. At (C) on overlay to HO Chart No 4217, several wrecks were noted. These could not be definitely identified by the informants as being naval ships but they did remember that the wrecks were badly rusted and that no salvage operations appeared to be in progress.

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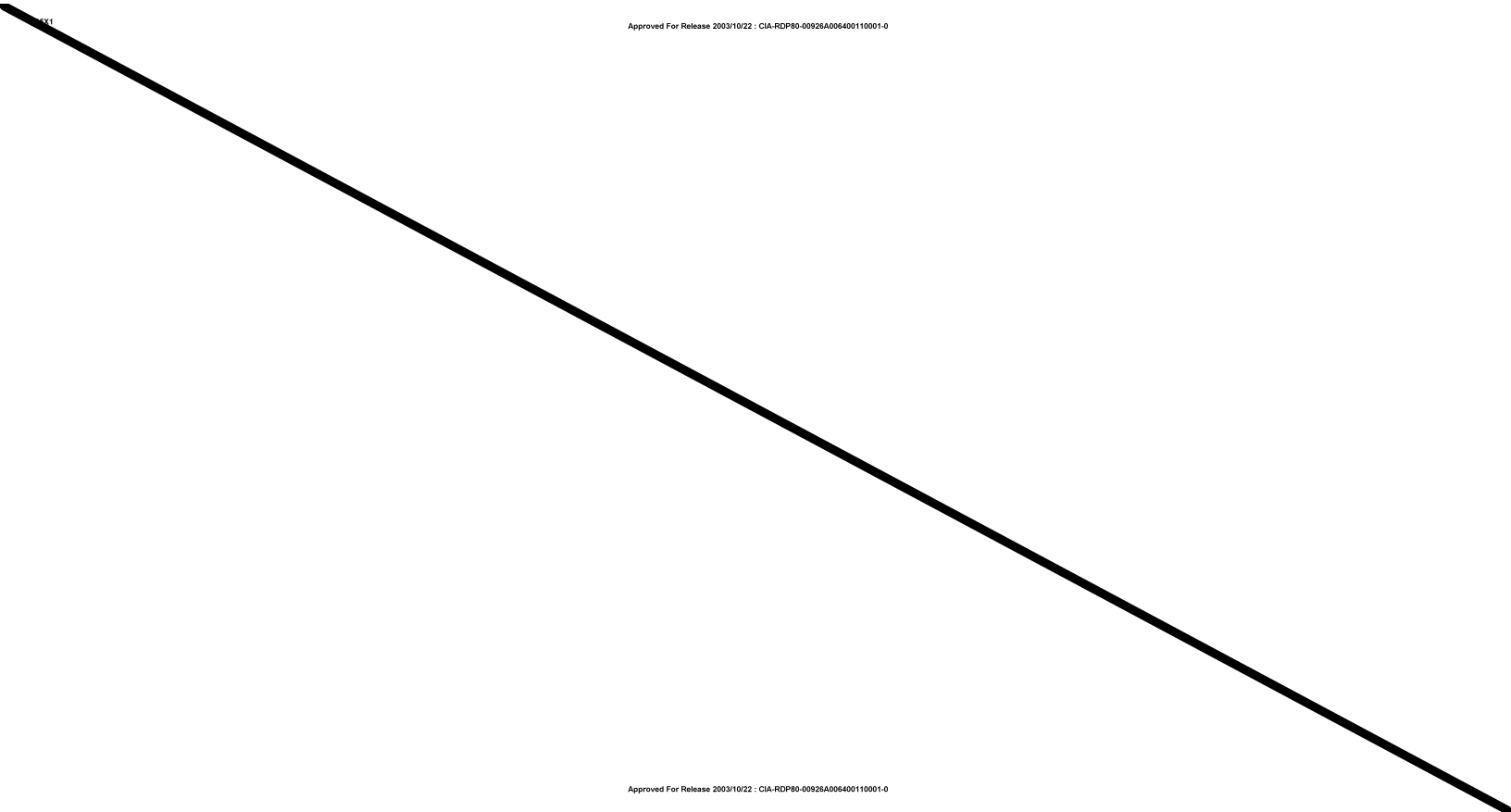
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13. The only other merchant ship noted in the harbor was an old Soviet tanker, the exact location and activity of which [redacted] 25X1
small fishing craft were observed in the vicinity of (D) on overlay to NO Chart No 4217.
14. While a naval vessel of a corvette type and displacing about one thousand tons was observed anchored at (E) on overlay to NO Chart No 4217, no other naval craft with the exception of a few small motor boats were observed in the harbor. 25X1
15. The only naval shore activity noted [redacted] was what seemed to be a small 25X1
naval workshop in the vicinity of (F) on overlay to NO Chart No 4217. [redacted]
could not definitely locate this workshop other than to state that it was somewhere in this area.
16. There was no activity noted at the marine railway and its condition was not observed.
17. [redacted] there was no extensive shipbuilding activity in Novo-rossisk harbor. However, [redacted] there might have been several fishing craft being repaired or built.
18. No new construction was observed in the port area. In fact, it was stated that Novorossisk was a "dead port."
19. The presence of floating drydocks and details about the cranes at the port were not observed.
20. Concerning the docking facilities: (a) Pier No 1 is destroyed and not in use. The 25X1
[redacted] rocks and parts of the pier are sticking out of the water.
(b) The passenger pier was still in a destroyed condition. (c) Pier No 2 was stated to be destroyed but no details given. (d) Pier No 4 was reported to be destroyed. In discussing the conditions of the piers, [redacted] that their 25X1
observations might not be completely accurate.
21. No coastal defenses or antiaircraft batteries were seen, nor were any harbor defenses such as minefields or nets believed to exist. 25X1
22. In discussing the importance of Novorossisk as a port and naval base, [redacted] laughed and said that they did not believe that the US had anything to worry about from a naval point of view.

25X1 [Available on loan from the CIA Library are overlays to BA Chart No 2380, Southern Approaches to Kherson Bay, and NO Chart No 4217, Novorossisk Bay, referred to in 25X1
the foregoing report.]

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